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OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA

MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 20 January 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of Bulgaria and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a joint statement on the Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Bulgaria on the determination of the boundary in the mouth of the Rezovska/Mutludere River and delimitation of the maritime areas between the two States in the Black Sea, signed by the Prime Ministers of the two countries on 4 December 1997 at Sofia (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly under agenda items 39 and 81.

(Signed) Philip DIMITROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
the Republic of Bulgaria
to the United Nations

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
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ANNEX

Joint statement on the Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Bulgaria on the determination of the boundary in the mouth of the Rezovska/Mutludere River and delimitation of the maritime areas between the two States in the Black Sea

The issue regarding the determination of the boundary in the mouth of the Rezovska/Mutludere River and delimitation of maritime areas in the Rezovo/Begendik Bay, of territorial waters, as well as the continental shelf and exclusive economic zones between Bulgaria and Turkey had been pending for over 40 years. It had been discussed during many bilateral meetings since 1964.

The Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Bulgaria on the determination of the boundary in the mouth of the Rezovska/Mutludere River and delimitation of the maritime areas between the two States in the Black Sea was signed by Prime Ministers Mesut Yilmaz and Ivan Kostov at Sofia on 4 December 1997.

With the signing of the Agreement, this long-standing issue between Bulgaria and Turkey has been resolved. This provides new impetus to the development of Turkish-Bulgarian relations, which are already at a very positive stage.

This has been achieved as a result of the Bulgarian and Turkish authorities displaying the necessary political will. The Agreement, signed at the level of Prime Ministers, was concluded after meaningful and comprehensive negotiations conducted with goodwill within the above-mentioned framework. The provisions of the Agreement pertaining to delimitation of areas where the two countries exercise sovereignty, sovereign rights or jurisdiction encompass just and mutually acceptable solutions satisfying the legitimate interests of both sides.

In fact, the willingness of Turkey and Bulgaria to achieve just and mutually acceptable solutions to existing bilateral issues through constructive negotiations and in the spirit of good-neighbourly relations has been emphasized in the preamble of the Agreement.

The signing of this Agreement between Bulgaria and Turkey is ample proof that long-standing bilateral problems can be resolved by utilizing the negotiation process envisaged, among other things, as the initial means of peaceful settlement in the Charter of the United Nations.

It is hoped that the spirit of political resolve and goodwill manifested at Sofia will inspire constructive and meaningful discussions between the Balkan countries in order to solve the existing problems in the Balkans.